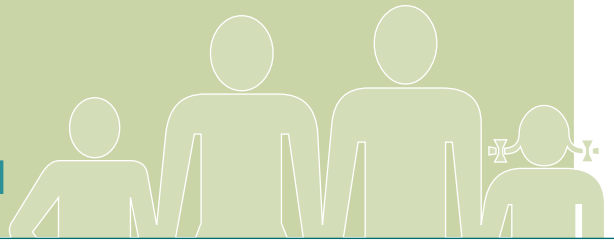


Foster Care Licensing for Relatives

FACT SHEET



Why Should I Be Licensed to Care for My Relative?

Children's Administration seeks to place children with relatives whenever possible. We know relatives can provide stable, committed homes for children in crisis. While licensing is not required for relative care, there are specific benefits:

- Foster care reimbursement is a higher rate than the grant available through Temporary Assistance to Needy Families. The 2012 basic foster care rates are:
 - ▶ Child ages 0 - 5 = \$423.68
 - ▶ Child ages 6 - 11 = \$500.69
 - ▶ Child ages 12 - 21 = \$575.30

Rates may be higher depending on the level of care the child needs.

- Partial reimbursement for damages or injuries caused by a child placed with you that are not fully covered by private insurance through the Foster Parent Reimbursement program.
- "Foster Care to 21" allows foster care reimbursement to foster parents providing care for youth over age 19 who continue in foster care so that he or she may participate in, or complete, a post high school academic or vocational program. This program is limited in the number of youth it can serve.
- Each applicant is assigned a foster care licensor who provides support through resource referral, training opportunities and individual consultation.

What Types of Residences Can Be Licensed as Foster Homes?

Foster families may rent or own their homes or apartments. Any home can be a foster home if:

- It is reasonably clean, safe and in good repair.
- Poisons and cleaning solutions are kept out of reach of children.
- Medications, including vitamins and herbal remedies, are in their original containers and in locked storage.
- All firearms, ammunition, and other weapons are kept in locked containers.
- Smoke detectors are installed.
- Approved fire extinguishers are in the home - All purpose (ABC) type or 2A10BC rated.

Any adult living in a potential foster home must:

- Complete a background clearance check with the FBI and Washington State Patrol.
- Submit tuberculosis tests dated within the last year.

Youth ages 16 to 18 in the household must complete a Washington State Patrol check.

There is no smoking in foster homes or in motor vehicles transporting children. Adults may smoke outdoors away from children.

Frequently Asked Questions About Foster Parenting as a Relative

- **Can a single person be a foster parent?**

Yes.

- **Is there an age minimum?**

Foster parents should be at least 21 years of age, however, we may waive this age requirement for relative caregivers.

- **How long does it take to become licensed?**

It takes approximately 90 days. We need you to return information quickly. Processing background checks can sometimes delay licensing.

- **How long would my relative stay in my home as a foster child?**

It depends on the particular child and the parents' situation. A child may stay in care a few days or several months. The goal is for the child to safely return home or have a permanent home if a safe return is not possible.

- **What contact will my relative foster child have with his/her biological parents?**

Most foster children have regular court ordered visits with their biological parents. Children and parents need to have regular contact for children to safely return home. The child's social worker will work with you and the child's parents to decide the location and time of the visits. The court decides whether the visits will be supervised.

- **Can my relative foster child share a room with my child?**

Most children may share bedrooms. Your licensor will work with you and your social worker to make sure that sharing bedrooms is safe for all of the children involved. Some children cannot share bedrooms because of behavior concerns.

Foster Care Licensing for Relatives

FACT SHEET

- **Can I spank my relative foster child?**

No. Foster parents and relative caregivers are prohibited from using any form of physical punishment for foster children. Positive discipline, combined with warmth and caring, should be used to teach the child.

- **Can we take our relative foster child with us on vacation?**

Yes. The child's social worker must approve the plan and know how to contact you.

- **Can we leave our relative foster child with a baby sitter?**

Yes. The sitter needs to be at least 16 years old (with a few exceptions). Respite care might also be available to you. Please consult with the child's social worker.

- **Is there a problem with our having pets?**

Family pets are not usually a problem. We evaluate pets to make sure there are no concerns about safety or cleanliness. Some children cannot be placed with some pets because of health issues (such as allergies).

- **What training is required?**

- ▶ First Aid/CPR
- ▶ Blood Borne Pathogens
- ▶ Licensing orientation
- ▶ PRIDE pre-service training
- ▶ Inservice training

- **What financial help is available?**

The Department provides reimbursement for foster care using standard rates that reflect the child's age and special needs.

Who Do I Contact For More Information?

▶ Region 1 North:	Laurie Palmquist, Spokane	PALL300@dshs.wa.gov	509.363.3523
▶ Region 1 South:	Maria Rivera, Yakima	ZIMA300@dshs.wa.gov	509.225.6561
▶ Region 2 North:	Vickie Tupper, Everett	TUVI300@dshs.wa.gov	425.339.2961
▶ Region 2 South:	Richard Tagorda, Seattle	TARI300@dshs.wa.gov	253.372.6014
▶ Region 3 North:	Charlotte Glen, Tacoma	GLCH300@dshs.wa.gov	253.983.6132
▶ Region 3 South:	Steve Overton, Vancouver	OVST300@dshs.wa.gov	360.993.7925



Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services

CA Children's Administration

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